

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 IO-13 ACDA-10 EUR-12 /102 W

-----170043Z 019144 /14

R 160630Z MAY 77

FM AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

TO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

SECSTATE WASHDC 6011

UNCLAS JOHANNESBURG 1173

CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SF

SUBJECT: JOHANNESBURG MEDIA REACTION TO BOTHA ELECTION VICTORY

1. JOHANNESBURG AFRIKAANS PAPER "DIE VADERLAND" MAY 12
EDITORIALIZED ON BOTHA WESTDENE VICTORY: "MR BOTHA SOUGHT CLEAR
MANDATE FOR DYNAMIC MOVEMENT AWAY FROM DISCRIMINATION INTERNALLY,
AND RELENTLESS RESISTANCE TO EXTERNAL PRESSURE FOR WHITE CAPIT-
ULATION.

HE GOT IT WITH AN OVERWHELMING 9126 VOTES TO A MEANINGLESS 652. BUT
HE DID NOT SEEK THIS MANDATE FOR HIMSELF. HE WAS ENDORSED
FROM THE PRIME MINISTER DOWN TO THE ORDINARY PARLIAMENTARIAN.
FOR THE SAG, THIS MEANS THE HNP CAN NOW FINALLY BE WRITTEN OFF,
WITH NO MORE LOOKING BACKWARDS OVER THE SHOULDER. SAG CAN NOW
PROCEED WITH ALL DUE HASTE WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF N.P.POLICY,
TO IMPLEMENT NECESSARY CHANGES".

2. SAME PAPER CARRIED EDITORIAL PAGE ARTICLE BY EDITOR DIRK
RICHARD TITLED "PIK BOTHA'S ACTIONS WILL BE A BAROMETER".
EDITOR WROTE: "I REALLY HOPE N.P. IS NOW RID OF HNP-COMPLEX,
THOUGH I WONDER IF IT WAS NECESSARY TO TAKE THEM SO SERIOUSLY
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IN THE FIRST PLACE. MR BOTHA PERSONALLY HAD MUCH TO DO
WITH THE RESULT. WESTDENE WAS UNIQUE IN THAT NO N.P.
CANDIDATE HAS ENJOYED SUCH GOODWILL OUTSIDE PARTY CIRCLES...
ENGLISH-SPEAKERS VOTED FOR HIM RATHER THAN FOR THE N.P.OR
AGAINST THE HNP. HE PROJECTED IMAGE OF SOPHISTICATED
WORLD FIGURE. INDEED, THEY PROBABLY VOTED MORE FOR HIS IMAGE
THAN FOR PIK THE NATIONALIST. (POOR PIK: IF HE GETS

TAGGED AS MESSIAH OF VERLIGHTHEID HE COULD MAKE MORE ENEMIES
WITHIN THE PARTY THAN IS POLITICALLY HEALTHY FOR HIM).
THERE WILL BE MIXED REACTIONS AMONG NAT POLITICIANS. THE
VERLIG WILL BELIEVE THEIR STANDPOINT VINDICATED. THE MORE
CONSERVATIVE WILL BE LESS ENTHUSIASTIC. SOME OF THEM HAVE
WARNED THIS PAPER'S POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT THAT "PIK AND
THE PRESS HAVE BUILT HIM UP TO SUCH HEIGHTS THAT HE'LL BREAK
HIS POLITICAL NECK IF HE FALLS". THEY BELIEVE HIS PHILOSOPHY
INCOMPATIBLE WITH PARTY POLICY, THAT HE CANNOT DELIVER ON
HIS PROMISES. THE PARTY MUCH ACCEPT WESTDENE AS IMPORTANT
POINTER TOWARDS FASTER CHANGE. DURING HIS CAMPAIGN
MR BOTHA DISMISSED PETTY APARTHEID. YET IN 1971 THE PREMIER SAW NO
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PETTY AND GRAND APARTHEID -- "APARTHEID IS
APARTHEID, PERIOD." DOES THIS VIEW STILL APPLY? IN
WESTDENE MR BOTHA SAID WE MUST BE PREPARED" TO LOSE AN EYE,
AN EAR, A COUPLE OF FINGERS TO ENSURE ULTIMATE SURVIVAL".
THE NORTHERN AFRIKAANS PRESS MAKES NO SECRET OF ITS
SUPPORT FOR PIK BOTHA'S POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY. HIS FUTURE
ACTIONS WILL SERVE AS BAROMETER OF THE PACE AT WHICH GOVT
WILL MOVE, AND INDICATE WHICH WING OF THE PARTY BEATS
STRONGEST. AFTER A YEAR WE'LL KNOW IF THE CAUCUS HAS
GIVEN HIM SUFFICIENT FREEDOM OF ACTION". KIRBY

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